Dear Dental Students,

As the COVID-19 pandemic remains a concern and risk in clinical learning, we wanted to provide you with key information as well as update commonly asked questions from students. While the guidelines from public health and our health care partners may and will change, these are the current recommendations. As always, you should consult with Public Health if you have any questions or reach out to Learner Experience.

**Commonly asked questions.**

**What does the government lockdown announced on December 21st mean for me?**

If you travelled outside of the province and returned during the Provincewide Shutdown Period, which starts 12:01 December 26, 2020, you will need to **self-isolate for 14 days upon arrival to the province.** [Province-wide Shutdown (ontario.ca)]

**If you suspect you have COVID 19.**

If you have symptoms consistent with a presentation of COVID 19 or fail the COVID screen for the health facility or Western, please **STAY HOME, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.**

You will need to:
- Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).
- Arrange to get a COVID test as soon as possible as you may not be able to return to school/clinic without a negative test result. The turn around time for test results at the community assessment centres is normally 24 hours.

**If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 by criteria**

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 you **MUST STAY HOME, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario.**

If you are positive, you must:

- Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**I learned that a patient for whom I had provided care has tested COVID positive. What do I need to do?**
During your time in clinic you should always have the appropriate PPE on when interacting with patients. This means if a patient is later diagnosed as being COVID positive you will be notified but no action is required. As long you were wearing your PPE and donning and doffing appropriately, you can continue in clinical learning. You will need to self monitor according to public health guidelines and seek care if your screening tool changes to positive.

If you have concerns about the PPE used or a break in your technique, you will need to stay home and get tested.

I learned that a health professional with whom I worked closely with has tested COVID 19 positive. What do I need to do?

During your clinical rotations you should always have the appropriate PPE on when interacting with patients, clinicians, other health professionals and colleagues. This scenario of contact with a masked clinician or colleague who was COVID compliant in technique requires no action besides self screening daily.

If a team or health care worker is later diagnosed as being COVID-19 positive, you will be notified. If you were wearing the appropriate PPE and followed technique, no action is required (besides self monitoring) and you can continue to work in clinical learning,

If you have concerns about the PPE used or technique followed, you will need to stay home and get tested.

What is a “Close Contact”?

A close contact is an individual with whom you have had a high-risk exposure. This can include individuals living together in the same household while not self-isolating; direct contact with infectious body fluids (cough, sneezed on); close (<2m) or prolonged, unprotected contact.

The definition of a “Close Contact” was recently changed by the CDC to read:

Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Read more on: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/appendix.html#contact
What do I do if I have had “Close Contact” with someone who is COVID positive?

At this time Public Health recommends asymptomatic close contacts of a confirmed case should **quarantine for 14 days** and get COVID-19 testing as soon as possible after identification of the case.

If you have had contact with someone who is COVID positive please report this absence to the School. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**My housemate has been diagnosed with COVID. What do I need to do?**

You will need to self-isolate at home or in a separate residence and arrange for COVID testing. Your housemate will need to stay in a separate room away from other people and use a separate bathroom if possible. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

You can call the School for support if this arises.

**My housemate has symptoms of COVID and is awaiting test results. What do I need to do?**


If a household member has symptoms of COVID-19 but has not yet tested:

- All other household members should quarantine (i.e. not attend work, school, childcare, etc).
- If it is decided that the symptomatic individual will not get tested for COVID-19, all household members are to remain in quarantine for 14 days.

If a household member has symptoms of COVID-19 and has been tested:

- All household members are to quarantine (i.e. not attend work, school, childcare, etc) until test results are known.
- If test results are negative, non-symptomatic household members may return to their normal activities and monitor themselves for symptoms. The symptomatic individual must remain in self isolation until 24 hours after their symptoms have improved.
- If test results are positive, all household members will be contacted by Health Unit staff with further direction.

If you develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19 you must **remain at home, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario**. You will need to be tested for
COVID-19. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**What if my housemate/partner works in an outbreak site or ward?**
Your housemate/partner will need to follow the guidelines as outlined by Public Health and IPAC at their hospital and you should monitor daily for symptoms of COVID. You can continue to participate in clinical learning unless your housemate/partner is symptomatic and/or tests positive. If this occurs, you must quarantine as part of the new Home Quarantine Guidelines released by MLHU on December 7, 2020.

If you develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19 you must remain at home, self-isolate and follow guidelines from Public Health Ontario. You will need to be tested for COVID-19. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**My housemate received notification from the COVID Alert app that they were in contact with someone who has tested COVID positive or Public Heath has notified my housemate that they were identified as a “Close Contact” of someone with COVID. What do I need to do?**

Your housemate will need to be tested for COVID-19. As long as you are asymptomatic, you can continue clinical learning and continue to monitor closely and regularly for COVID symptoms.

If your housemate develops symptoms you can continue in clinical learning but if you develop symptoms you must stay home. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**I received notification from the COVID Alert app that I was in contact with someone who has tested positive. What do I need to do?**

As per Public Health Ontario, [https://covid-19.ontario.ca/exposed](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/exposed), if you are notified by the COVID Alert app, or think you have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, you must get tested. Stay home and self-isolate until you get your result.

If your test is positive you will need to continue to self-isolate for 14 days. Notify the Learner Experience Office, Ally Fornelos (for absence from clinical activities, and Brenda Davis (for absence from any academic activities).

**If your test is negative, you can return to learning but continue to monitor.**
When can I return to academic learning or clinical responsibilities?

Once you have completed your self-isolation (COVID positive or COVID negative but a close contact of someone COVID positive) as directed by public health, you can return to school. You do not need to notify anyone.

If you have any questions, please reach out to learner.experience@schulch.uwo.ca.

Updated December 22, 2020